

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

February 13, 2014

The Honorable Thomas Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

143

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General of the United States
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Edith Ramirez
Chairwoman
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Chairman Wheeler, Attorney General Holder, and Chairwoman Ramirez,

I am writing you regarding reports that Comcast plans to expand its empire by acquiring Time Warner Cable for over \$40 billion. I have serious reservations about this proposed transaction, which would consolidate the largest and second largest cable providers in America. I urge you to act quickly and decisively to ensure that consumers are not exposed to increased cable prices and decreased quality of service as a result of this transaction.

Cable rates have risen significantly over the last two decades, and my constituents express frustration at being squeezed by unacceptably high cable bills every month. Many consumers would switch cable providers if only they had a viable option to do so. Unfortunately, a handful of cable providers dominate the market, leaving consumers with little choice but to pay high bills for often unsatisfactory service. I am concerned that Comcast's proposed acquisition of Time Warner would only make things worse for consumers.

The fact that Comcast already has acquired NBC Universal also increases my concern about the proposed expansion of Comcast's empire. As you know, I strongly opposed the Comcast-NBC Universal transaction because it gave Comcast too much control over television content, control Comcast could exert to raise prices, thus harming consumers and competitors. Comcast's proposed acquisition of Time Warner threatens to extend Comcast's domination of both the cable and content markets even further. And, to make

matters worse, all of this is taking place amidst ongoing questions as to Comcast's compliance with the terms and conditions set forth as part of the NBC Universal deal.

I urge you to take all appropriate actions in light of last night's reports that Comcast will attempt to acquire Time Warner, and I look forward to working closely with you on this issue. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, or Joshua Riley on my staff at (202) 224-5641.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Franken", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Al Franken
United States Senator